

**WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1 1. A method of creating a marketplace with hosted supplier stores comprising the steps  
2 of:  
3 providing tools for creating and managing a hosted supplier store to each of a  
4 plurality of suppliers through a commerce site, said tools including a catalog  
5 facility for uploading and managing a supplier catalog for said hosted  
6 supplier store;  
7 receiving a plurality of supplier catalogs from said plurality of suppliers;  
8 aggregating said plurality of supplier catalogs into an aggregated catalog; and  
9 providing a buyer with access to said aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1 2. The method of claim 1, further including:  
2 providing a supplier hub catalog topology; and  
3 wherein said step of aggregating includes aggregating said supplier catalogs  
4 according to said supplier hub catalog topology.

1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein:

2 said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific

3 products;

4 said buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted supplier

5 stores owned by one of said suppliers; and

6 said step of aggregating includes aggregating said shared marketplace products from

7 all of said suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of said

8 suppliers.

1 4. The method of claim 1, further including:

2 receiving contract data from one of said suppliers, said contract data including

3 entitlement information for said buyer in relation to a product; and

4 wherein the step of providing said buyer with access includes filtering said

5 aggregated catalog based upon said entitlement information.

1 5. The method of claim 4, further including:  
2 receiving a buyer request for said product; and  
3 wherein said step of filtering includes identifying hosted supplier stores offering said  
4 product, identifying eligible contracts within said identified hosted supplier  
5 stores, retrieving entitlement information from said eligible contracts, and  
6 applying said retrieved entitlement information, wherein said entitlement  
7 information includes pricing.

1 6. The method of claim 1, further including the steps of:  
2 providing said buyer with trading mechanisms for generating orders for items within  
3 said aggregated catalog;  
4 developing requests for quotations for made-to-order items; and  
5 negotiating contracts between said suppliers and said buyers.

1    7. A computer program having a computer-readable medium tangibly embodying  
2 computer executable instructions for creating a marketplace with hosted supplier stores, the  
3 computer executable instructions comprising:  
4            computer executable tools for creating and managing a hosted supplier store  
5                    through a commerce site, said tools including a catalog facility for uploading  
6                            and managing a supplier catalog for said hosted supplier store;  
7            computer executable instructions for receiving a plurality of supplier catalogs from  
8                            said plurality of suppliers;  
9            computer executable instructions for aggregating said plurality of supplier catalogs  
10                            into an aggregated catalog; and  
11            computer executable instructions for providing a buyer with access to said  
12                            aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1    8. The computer program of claim 7, further including:  
2            computer executable instructions defining a supplier hub catalog topology; and  
3            wherein said computer executable instructions for aggregating include computer  
4                            executable instructions for aggregating said supplier catalogs according to  
5                            said supplier hub catalog topology.

1 9. The computer program of claim 7, wherein :

2       said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific

3               products;

4       said buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted supplier

5               stores owned by one of said suppliers; and

6       said computer executable instructions for aggregating include computer executable

7               instructions for aggregating said shared marketplace products from all of

8               said suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of said

9               suppliers.

1 10. The computer program of claim 7, further including:

2               computer executable instructions for receiving contract data from one of

3       said suppliers, said contract data including entitlement information for said buyer in

4       relation to a product; and

5               wherein said computer executable instructions for providing said buyer

6       access to said aggregated catalog includes computer executable instructions for

7       filtering said aggregated catalog based upon said entitlement information.

1 11. The computer program of claim 10, further including:  
2 computer executable instructions for receiving a buyer request for said  
3 product; and  
4 wherein said computer executable instructions for filtering include computer  
5 executable instructions for identifying hosted supplier stores offering said product,  
6 identifying eligible contracts within said identified hosted supplier stores, retrieving  
7 entitlement information from said eligible contracts, and applying said retrieved  
8 entitlement information, wherein said entitlement information includes pricing.

1 12. The computer program of claim 7, further including the steps of:  
2 computer executable instructions for providing said buyer with trading mechanisms  
3 for generating orders for items within said aggregated catalog;  
4 developing requests for quotations for made-to-order items; and  
5 negotiating contracts between said suppliers and said buyers.

1 13. A system for online commerce between multiple buyers and multiple suppliers, the  
2 system comprising:  
3 a member subsystem for registering buyers and suppliers, whereby registered buyers  
4 are permitted to access said system for online commerce, and registered  
5 suppliers are permitted to access said system to create and manage a hosted  
6 supplier store;  
7 a database having stored thereon a plurality of supplier catalogs uploaded by said  
8 registered suppliers for a plurality of said hosted supplier stores;  
9 a catalog subsystem for aggregating said plurality of supplier catalogs into an  
10 aggregated catalog; and  
11 an application server for providing said registered buyers with access to said  
12 aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1 14. The system of claim 13, wherein said database further includes a defined supplier hub  
2 catalog topology, and wherein said catalog subsystem aggregates said supplier catalogs  
3 according to said supplier hub catalog topology.

1 15. The system of claim 13, wherein:

2 said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific  
3 products;

4 said registered buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted  
5 supplier stores owned by one of said registered suppliers; and

6 said catalog subsystem aggregates said shared marketplace products from all of said  
7 registered suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of  
8 said registered suppliers.

1 16. The system of claim 13, further comprising:

2 a contracts subsystem including contract data received from one of said registered  
3 suppliers, said contract data including entitlement information for said  
4 registered buyer in relation to a product; and

5 wherein said contract subsystem filters said aggregated catalog based upon said  
6 entitlement information before said application server provides said  
7 registered buyer with access to said filtered aggregated catalog.

1 17. The system of claim 16, wherein said entitlement information includes item pricing  
2 information.

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1 18. The system of claim 13, further comprising a trading subsystem providing a  
2 transaction mechanism adapted for said registered buyers to generate orders for items within  
3 said aggregated catalog, develop requests for quotations for made-to-order items, and to  
4 negotiate contracts with said suppliers.

1 19. An online marketplace for commerce between multiple buyers and multiple suppliers,  
2 said online marketplace comprising:  
3 a plurality of hosted supplier stores each managed by a respective registered  
4 supplier, said hosted supplier stores each including a supplier catalog  
5 containing a hierarchy of categories, products, and saleable items uploaded  
6 by said respective registered supplier;  
7 an aggregated catalog containing a hierarchy of categories, products, and items that  
8 includes an aggregation of said supplier catalogs;  
9 trading mechanisms, including item ordering and requests for quotations for items;  
10 and  
11 a supplier hub through which a registered buyer browses said aggregated catalog  
12 and utilizes said trading mechanisms.

1    20.    The online marketplace of claim 19, further including:

2            a plurality of contracts between registered buyers and registered suppliers, each of

3            said contracts including entitlement information for one of said registered

4            buyer in relation to a product of one of said registered suppliers; and

5            an entitlement-based filter for filtering said aggregated catalog based upon said

6            entitlement information for a selected registered buyer, thereby enforcing

7            one of said contracts.

1 21. A computer-readable data signal for propagation in a medium, the signal comprising  
2 computer-readable code for providing a marketplace with hosted supplier stores, the  
3 computer-readable code including:  
4 means for creating and managing a hosted supplier store through a commerce  
5 site, said means for creating and managing including a catalog facility for  
6 uploading and managing a supplier catalog for said hosted supplier store;  
7 means for uploading a supplier catalog to said hosted supplier store; and  
8 means for receiving an aggregated catalog, whereby said aggregated catalog is an  
9 aggregation of said supplier catalog with other supplier catalogs  
10 associated with other hosted supplier stores, and a buyer is provided  
11 access to said aggregated catalog on said commerce site.

1 22. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, further including:  
2 means for specifying a supplier hub catalog topology, and  
3 wherein said aggregated catalog is an aggregation of said supplier catalog and  
4 said other supplier catalogs according to said supplier hub catalog  
5 topology.

1 23. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, wherein:

2       said supplier catalogs include shared marketplace products and supplier-specific

3               products;

4       said buyer accesses said aggregated catalog through one of said hosted supplier

5               stores owned by one of said suppliers; and

6       said aggregated catalog includes said shared marketplace products from all of said

7               suppliers with said supplier-specific products from said one of said suppliers.

1 24. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, further including:

2       means for receiving contract data from one of said suppliers, said contract data

3               including entitlement information for said buyer in relation to a product;

4               and

5       wherein said aggregated catalog provided for said buyer is filtered based upon

6               said entitlement information.

1 25. The computer-readable data signal of claim 21, further including:

2       means for generating orders for items within said aggregated catalog;

3       developing requests for quotations for made-to-order items, and

4       negotiating contracts between said suppliers and said buyers.